

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 VALLET 00726 271122Z

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 EB-07 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /076 W

-----096396 271151Z /46

R 271025Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7473

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L VALLETTA 0726

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, MT

SUBJECT: MINTOFF PRESS CONFERENCE DURING MEDITERRANEAN
SOCIALIST MEETING

REF: VALLETTA 0703, AND PREVIOUS (NOTAL)

1. TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE PRESENCE IN MALTA OF A NUMBER
OF FOREIGN JOURNALISTS COVERING THE MEETING OF "PROGRESSIVE"

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 VALLET 00726 271122Z

MEDITERRANEAN SOCIALISTS, MALTESE PRIME MINISTER MINTOFF
SUMMONED THEM TO HIS OFFICE ON JUNE 24 FOR A SO-CALLED
PRESS CONFERENCE. THIS TWO-HOUR AFFAIR CONSISTED OF A
MINTOFFIAN MONOLOGUE (DELIVERED IN MALTESE), WHICH WAS
THEN LABORIOUSLY TRANSLATED INTO FIVE OTHER LANGUAGES (ONE
AT A TIME, RATHER THAN SIMULTANEOUSLY), FOLLOWING WHICH
MINTOFF ACCEPTED A FEW WRITTEN QUESTIONS, MOST OF WHICH

HE REFUSED TO ANSWER. THE MAIN PURPOSE OF MINTOFF'S PERFORMANCE OBVIOUSLY WAS TO OBTAIN FREE PUBLICITY FOR HIS IDEAS ABOUT MALTA'S FUTURE AND HIS CONCEPT OF "PEACE" FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN.

2. MUCH OF MINTOFF'S STATEMENT TO THE JOURNALISTS CONSISTED OF HIS VERSION OF THE HISTORY OF MALTESE POLITICS SINCE HIS LABOR (NOW "PROGRESSIVE SOCIALIST") ADMINISTRATION WAS ELECTED IN 1971. ONCE AGAIN, HE WENT OVER THE FAMILIAR GROUND OF HOW HE HAD WORKED TO TURN MALTA FROM A MILITARY FORTRESS OF THE FOREIGNERS (THE BRITISH AND NATO) INTO A "TRULY MALTESE" ISLAND OF PEACE, WHOSE REAL INDEPENDENCE WOULD BEGIN IN 1979 AFTER THE LAST BRITISH FORCES LEAVE.

3. WITH REGARD TO 1979, MINTOFF REPEATED THE FAMILIAR THEME THAT MALTA REQUIRED FUTURE GUARANTEES OF ITS NEUTRALITY AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING FROM ITS MEDITERRANEAN NEIGHBORS, AND HE SAID THIS WAS WHY HIS GOVERNMENT WAS PURSUING THIS SUBJECT URGENTLY WITH LIBYA, ALGERIA, FRANCE AND ITALY. HE THEN ANNOUNCED THAT THE DISCUSSIONS WITH FRANCE AND ITALY HAD MADE PROGRESS AS THE RESULT OF HIS RECENT VISITS TO PARIS AND ROME (FOLLOWING THE COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE IN LONDON), AND THAT HE MIGHT "SOON BE ABLE TO ANNOUNCE AN AGREEMENT ON THE MORE IMPORTANT PARTS OF AN ACCORD" WITH THESE TWO COUNTRIES ABOUT MALTA'S FUTURE. HOWEVER, WHEN ASKED SUBSEQUENTLY ABOUT THE DETAILS OF THESE DISCUSSIONS, MINTOFF REPLIED THAT HE COULD NOT ELABORATE.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 VALLET 00726 271122Z

4. TURNING TO THE CONFERENCE OF MEDITERRANEAN SOCIALISTS, MINTOFF CLAIMED THAT THIS WAS THE "CROWNING EFFORT" OF MALTA'S WORK TOWARD PEACE IN THE AREA. HE ANNOUNCED THAT AGREEMENT ON THREE MAIN ISSUES HAD BEEN REACHED AT THE CONFERENCE. IT HAD BEEN DECIDED THAT THE NATIONS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN SHOULD: (1) WORK TOGETHER TO STRENGTHEN THEIR UNITY AND TO ENABLE ALL PEOPLES -- SUCH AS THE PALESTINIANS AND THE CYPRIOTS -- TO LIVE IN FREEDOM; (2) JOINTLY PRESS THE GOVERNMENTS ATTENDING THE BELGRADE CSCE MEETING TO ESTABLISH MACHINERY WHICH WOULD ENSURE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN DOCUMENT SIGNED AT HELSINKI; AND (3) CREATE MEANS BY WHICH THEIR MEDIA COULD "SPREAD THE SOCIALIST IDEAL" THROUGHOUT THE MEDITERRANEAN AND THUS FOSTER ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION IN THE AREA.

5. AMONG THE QUESTIONS WHICH MINTOFF DUCKED WAS ONE ON THE MEDIAN LINE DISPUTE BETWEEN MALTA AND LIBYA. HIS ANSWER WAS THAT THE POSITION WAS EXACTLY THE SAME AS THE ONE BETWEEN LIBYA AND TUNISIA. MINTOFF ALSO REFUSED TO COMMENT ON THE RECENTLY-CONCLUDED COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE. WHEN ASKED IF THE ISRAELI SOCIALIST PARTY WOULD BE ACCEPTED

INTO THE ORGANIZATION HOLDING THE PRESENT MEDITERRANEAN CONFERENCE, MINTOFF REGLED THAT THIS MIGHT BE POSSIBLE IF THE ISRAELIS ONLY AGREED TO THE EARLIER BARCELONA DECLARATION OF THE GROUP, TO "GIVE THE PALESTINIANS THEIR RIGHTS", AND TO WORK FOR THE REDUCTION OF US AND RUSSIAN FORCES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA.

6. COMMENT: ALL IN ALL, IT WAS A TYPICALLY PAROCHIAL MINTOFF PERFORMANCE, DESIGNED TO ENHANCE HIS PERSONAL IMAGE WITH THE MALTESE PUBLIC (WHO HAD ALMOST COMPLETELY IGNORED THE WEEK-LONG SOCIALIST CONFERENCE) AND, HOPEFULLY, TO GAIN ADDITIONAL COVERAGE OF MALTESE AFFAIRS IN THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS. HOWEVER, DUE TO THE GENERAL DISGRUNTLEMENT AMONG THE FOREIGN REPORTERS WITH MINTOFF'S CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 VALLET 00726 271122Z

"I KNOW, BUT I CAN'T TELL YOU" APPROACH TO QUESTIONS, IT IS NOT LIKELY THAT HE MADE ANY HEADLINES ABROAD. AS FAR AS THE SOCIALIST CONFERENCE WAS CONCERNED, IT WAS INTERESTING THAT MINTOFF WAS ABLE TO ANNOUNCE THE RESULTS ALMOST TWO DAYS BEFORE THE PARTICIPANTS THEMSELVES HAD AGREED TO ANYTHING. END COMMENT. LAINGEN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, REPORTS, PRESS CONFERENCES, MEETINGS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 27-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977VALLET00726
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770228-0973
Format: TEL
From: VALLETTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770614/aaaaalzc.tel
Line Count: 142
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a84eda75-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 VALLETTA 703
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2020714
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MINTOFF PRESS CONFERENCE DURING MEDITERRANEAN SOCIALIST MEETING
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, MT, (MINTOFF, DOMINIC)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a84eda75-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009